

Buddhist Studies

The Berkeley Group in Buddhist Studies offers an interdisciplinary program of study and research leading to a PhD degree in Buddhist Studies. The group, which cooperates closely with the Departments of South and Southeast Asian Studies (SSEAS) and East Asian Languages and Cultures (EALC), emphasizes the study of Buddhism in its many forms within its Asian historical and cultural context.

Students are expected to acquire a sophisticated appreciation of the historical, social, and cultural milieu from which the Buddhist textual legacy emerged. All students in the PhD program are encouraged to broaden and deepen their understanding of Buddhist phenomena through incorporating archaeological, ethnographic, and visual materials and perspectives.

The goal of our program is not only to provide students with the linguistic, methodological, and conceptual skills to produce significant new research on Buddhist phenomena, but also to have students bring their research into dialogue with ongoing issues and concerns in the humanities writ large.

The PhD program in Buddhist studies is designed for students who intend to become scholars and teachers at the university level.

Admission to the University

Uniform minimum requirements for admission

The following minimum requirements apply to all programs and will be verified by the Graduate Division:

1. A bachelor's degree or recognized equivalent from an accredited institution;
2. A minimum grade-point average of B or better (3.0);
3. If the applicant comes from a country or political entity (e.g. Quebec) where English is not the official language, adequate proficiency in English to do graduate work, as evidenced by a TOEFL score of at least 570 on the paper-and-pencil test, 230 on the computer-based test, 90 on the iBT test, or an IELTS Band score of at least 7 (note that individual programs may set higher levels for any of these); and
4. Enough undergraduate training to do graduate work in the given field.

Applicants who already hold a graduate degree

The Graduate Council views academic degrees as evidence of broad research training, not as vocational training certificates; therefore, applicants who already have academic graduate degrees should be able to take up new subject matter on a serious level without undertaking a graduate program, unless the fields are completely dissimilar.

Programs may consider students for an additional academic master's or professional master's degree if the additional degree is in a distinctly different field.

Applicants admitted to a doctoral program that requires a master's degree to be earned at Berkeley as a prerequisite (even though the applicant already has a master's degree from another institution in the same or

a closely allied field of study) will be permitted to undertake the second master's degree, despite the overlap in field.

The Graduate Division will admit students for a second doctoral degree only if they meet the following guidelines:

1. Applicants with doctoral degrees may be admitted for an additional doctoral degree only if that degree program is in a general area of knowledge distinctly different from the field in which they earned their original degree. For example, a physics PhD could be admitted to a doctoral degree program in music or history; however, a student with a doctoral degree in mathematics would not be permitted to add a PhD in statistics.
2. Applicants who hold the PhD degree may be admitted to a professional doctorate or professional master's degree program if there is no duplication of training involved.

Applicants may only apply to one single degree program or one concurrent degree program per admission cycle.

Any applicant who was previously registered at Berkeley as a graduate student, no matter how briefly, must apply for readmission, not admission, even if the new application is to a different program.

Required documents for admissions applications

1. **Transcripts:** Upload unofficial transcripts with the application for the departmental initial review. Official transcripts of all college-level work will be required **if admitted**. Official transcripts must be in sealed envelopes as issued by the school(s) you have attended. Request a current transcript from every post-secondary school that you have attended, including community colleges, summer sessions, and extension programs. If you have attended Berkeley, upload unofficial transcript with the application for the departmental initial review. Official transcript with evidence of degree conferral **will not** be required if admitted.
2. **Letters of recommendation:** Applicants can request online letters of recommendation through the online application system. Hard copies of recommendation letters must be sent directly to the program, not the Graduate Division.
3. **Evidence of English language proficiency:** All applicants from countries in which the official language is not English are required to submit official evidence of English language proficiency. This requirement applies to applicants from Bangladesh, Burma, Nepal, India, Pakistan, Latin America, the Middle East, the People's Republic of China, Taiwan, Japan, Korea, Southeast Asia, and most European countries. However, applicants who, at the time of application, have already completed at least one year of full-time academic course work with grades of B or better at a U.S. university may submit an official transcript from the U.S. university to fulfill this requirement. The following courses will not fulfill this requirement: 1) courses in English as a Second Language, 2) courses conducted in a language other than English, 3) courses that will be completed after the application is submitted, and 4) courses of a non-academic nature. If applicants have previously been denied admission to Berkeley on the basis of their English language proficiency, they must submit new test scores that meet the current minimum from one of the standardized tests.

Admission to the Program

Please include program-specific admissions criteria, required preparation and documentation.

Students wishing to enter the PhD program must have a master's degree in a relevant field, typically East Asian, South Asian, or Southeast Asian studies. A master's degree in religion is deemed relevant only if it includes significant training in an Asian language relevant to their intended area of research at the time of admission.

Curriculum

BUDDSTD 200	Proseminar in Buddhist Studies	1
Electives: Eight graduate or upper-division seminars, per approved study list, including the following:		
Buddhist art history		
Chosen regional breadth field		
Chosen disciplinary field		

Buddhist Studies

BUDDSTD 200 Proseminar in Buddhist Studies 1 Unit

This seminar provides an opportunity for all students and faculty in the Group in Buddhist Studies to gather together on a regular basis to discuss recent theoretically significant works in the field of Buddhist Studies, as well as pertinent and important works in related disciplines (anthropology, art history, literature, history, philosophy, and religious studies). The content of the course will be adjusted from semester to semester so as to best accommodate the needs and interest of the students, but the focus will be on recent works representing the "state of the field."

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Graduate standing in the Buddhist Studies Ph.D. program or consent of instructor

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit as topic varies. Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 5 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Buddhist Studies/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

BUDDSTD C214 Seminar in Tibetan Buddhism 2 or 4 Units

This course provides a place for graduate-level seminars in Tibetan Buddhism that rely primarily on secondary sources and Tibetan texts in translation. Content will vary between semesters but will typically focus on a particular theme. Themes will be chosen according to student interests, with an eye toward introducing students to the breadth of available western scholarship on Tibet, from classics in the field to the latest publications.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit. Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3-3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Buddhist Studies/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

Instructor: Dalton

Also listed as: S ASIAN C214/TIBETAN C214

BUDDSTD C215 Readings in Indian Buddhist Texts 2 - 4 Units

This graduate seminar focuses on reading a wide spectrum of Indian Buddhist texts in the Sanskrit (or Pali) original introducing the students to different genres, and different aspects of Indian Buddhism. The students taking the course for two units (rather than four) will be expected to prepare thoroughly every week for the reading of Buddhist texts in the original. They will also be expected to read all related secondary literature that is assigned to supplement the study of the primary source material. In contrast to the students taking the course for four units, they will not be expected to write a term paper or to prepare special presentations for class.

Rules & Requirements

Credit Restrictions: Students will receive no credit for South Asian C215/ Group in Buddhist Studies C215 after completing South Asian 215A, or South Asian C215A/Group in Buddhist Studies C215A.

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit. Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3-3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Buddhist Studies/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

Instructor: Rospatt

Formerly known as: South Asian C215A/Group in Buddhist Studies C215A

Also listed as: S ASIAN C215

BUDDSTD 220 Seminar in Buddhism and Buddhist Texts 2 or 4 Units
Content varies with student interest and needs. The course will normally focus on classical Buddhist texts that exist in multiple recensions and languages, including Chinese, Sanskrit, and Tibetan.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Consent of instructor

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit as topic varies. Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3-3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Buddhist Studies/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

BUDDSTD C220 Seminar in Buddhism and Buddhist Texts 2 or 4 Units
Content varies with student interests. The course will normally focus on classical Buddhist texts that exist in multiple recensions and languages, including Chinese, Sanskrit, and Tibetan.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit. Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3-3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Buddhist Studies/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

Also listed as: EA LANG C220/S, SEASN C220

BUDDSTD C223 Readings in Chinese Buddhist Texts 2 or 4 Units
This seminar is an intensive introduction to various genres of Buddhist literature in classical Chinese, including translations of Sanskrit and Central Asian scriptures. Chinese commentaries, philosophical treatises, hagiographies, and sectarian works. It is intended for graduate students who already have some facility in classical Chinese. It will also serve as a tools and methods course, covering the basic reference works and secondary scholarship in the field of East Asian Buddhism. The content of the course will be adjusted from semester to semester to best accommodate the needs and interests of students.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Consent of instructor

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit as topic varies. Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3-3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Buddhist Studies/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

Also listed as: CHINESE C223

BUDDSTD C224 Readings in Tibetan Buddhist Texts 2 or 4 Units
This seminar provides an introduction to a broad range of Tibetan Buddhist texts, including chronicles and histories, biographical literature, doctrinal treatises, canonical texts, ritual manuals, pilgrimage guides, and liturgical texts. It is intended for graduate students interested in premodern Tibet from any perspective. Students are required to do all of the readings in the original classical Tibetan. It will also serve as a tools and methods for the study of Tibetan Buddhist literature, including standard lexical and bibliographic references, digital resources, and secondary literature in modern languages. The content of the course will vary from semester to semester to account for the needs and interests of particular students.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Consent of instructor

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3-3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Buddhist Studies/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

Instructor: Dalton

Also listed as: S ASIAN C224/TIBETAN C224

BUDDSTD C225 Readings in Japanese Buddhist Texts 2 or 4 Units
 This seminar serves as an introduction to a broad range of Japanese Buddhist literature belonging to different historical periods and genres, including liturgical texts; monastic records, rules, and ritual manuals; doctrinal treatises; biographies of monks; and histories of Buddhism in Japan. Students are required to do all the readings in the original languages, which are classical Chinese (Kanbun) and classical Japanese. It will also serve as a tools and methods course, covering basic reference works and secondary scholarship in the field of Japanese Buddhism. The content of the course will be adjusted from semester to semester to accommodate the needs and interests of the students.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Consent of instructor

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit. Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3-3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Buddhist Studies/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

Also listed as: JAPAN C225

BUDDSTD 250 Art and Archaeology of Buddhism 2 or 4 Units
 This seminar offers a multidisciplinary approach to the origins, development, and diffusion of Buddhist art and archaeology in South, Central and Southeast Asia. Seminar content will vary from year to year depending on faculty and graduate student research interests. Topics may include the early archaeological and numismatic record, aniconic and figurative depictions of the Buddha and Buddhist deities, painted and sculpted narratives, studies of particular sites such as Polunaruva and Angkor, the caves of the Western Deccan, Buddhist Monasteries in the Himalayan region, and so on.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3-3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Buddhist Studies/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

BUDDSTD 298 Directed Study for Graduate Students 1 - 8 Units
 Special tutorial or seminar on selected topics not covered by available courses or seminars.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit as texts vary. Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 1-8 hours of independent study per week

Summer:

6 weeks - 2.5-20 hours of independent study per week

8 weeks - 1.5-15 hours of independent study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Buddhist Studies/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

BUDDSTD 299 Thesis Preparation and Related Research 1 - 8 Units

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Consent of thesis supervisor and graduate adviser

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit. Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 1-8 hours of independent study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Buddhist Studies/Graduate

Grading: Offered for satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade only.

BUDDSTD 601 Individual Study for Master's Students 1 - 8 Units
 Individual study for the comprehensive or language requirements in consultation with the graduate adviser. Units may not be used to meet either unit or residence requirements for a master's degree.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Consent of graduate adviser

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit. Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 1-8 hours of independent study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Buddhist Studies/Graduate examination preparation

Grading: Offered for satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade only.

BUDDSTD 602 Individual Study for Doctoral Students 1 - 8 Units
Individual study in consultation with the major field adviser, intended to provide an opportunity for qualified students to prepare for various examinations required of candidates for the Ph.D.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit. Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 1-8 hours of independent study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Buddhist Studies/Graduate examination preparation

Grading: Offered for satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade only.